

REMARKS

By the above amendment, claim 1 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 3 and 5-7 have been amended. Applicants note that support for the amendment can be found, for example, in the original claims. In this regard, Applicants note that the amended claims 3 and 5-7 originally were written as multiple dependent claims, depending from both claims 1 and 2. A preliminary amendment filed with the application caused those claims to depend from claim 1, and with this amendment, they depend now from claim 2.

In view of the above amendment and the following response to the Office Action, Applicants hereby believe that all the claims of the application are in condition for allowance.

Allowance of claims

Applicants note with appreciation that the Examiner has allowed claims 2, 4, and 10-13.

Art-based rejections

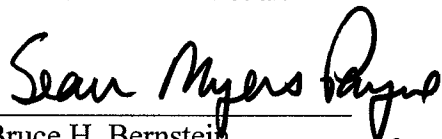
The Office Action maintains the following rejections:

- (a) Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,912,087 to Jackson et al ("Jackson").
- (b) Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious based on Jackson in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,985,467 to Beele ("Beele").
- (c) Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious based on Jackson in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,273,712 to Czech et al. ("Czech").
- (d) Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious based on Jackson in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,714,624 to Naik et al. ("Naik").
- (e) Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious based on Jackson in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,514,482 to Strangman et al. ("Strangman").

In response, Applicants respectfully note that the present amendment cancels claim 1 and amends the other rejected claims so that they depend from allowed claim 2. The cancellation of claim 1 is without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Applicants submit that the present amendment is fully responsive to the outstanding Office Action and should place the application in condition for allowance.

Reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action and allowance of the present application and all the claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate. If the Examiner has any questions or wishes to discuss this matter, she is invited to contact the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,
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